

TOP SECRET

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum



THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

Information as of 1600
20 July 1966

State Dept. review completed

ARMY review(s) completed.

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
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20 July 1966

HIGHLIGHTS

The South Vietnamese Government commemorated the 12th anniversary of the signing of the Geneva Accords by once again publicizing its uncompromising view on ending the war, which is contingent upon Hanoi's abandoning its war effort, and dissolving the National Liberation Front. Hanoi, for its part, on 19 July roundly denounced third-party efforts to bring about a negotiated settlement of the war on any but its terms.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
Two allied operations--MOKULEIA and HASTINGS/LAM SON 289--have reported sporadic activity following heavy encounters with enemy forces (Paras. 1-2). Weekly review of South Vietnam battle statistics (Para. 4).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:
The South Vietnamese Government on the occasion of the 12th anniversary of the Geneva Accords today reaffirmed its uncompromising view on ending the war (Paras. 1-2). Other speeches at the ceremonies in Saigon touched upon possible negotiations for reunification once the war was ended, but emphasized the need to keep striking at the North as long as the war lasts (Para. 3). The government released 13 North Vietnamese prisoners at the North - South Vietnamese border today as a part of the anniversary ceremonies (Para. 4). Southern Buddhist leader Mai Tho Truyen today declared that he would take part in Father Quynh's antigovernment "Front of all Religions" (Para. 5). The one-day strike by RMK employees at Cam Ranh was reported ending today, although RMK officials fear that a strike for higher wages may resume in Saigon on 25 July (Para. 6). Premier Ky has reportedly appointed a Hoa Hao member as one of his assistants, following earlier reports of Hoa Hao dissatisfaction with the new cabinet alignment (Para. 7).

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III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Seven US aircraft have been downed over North Vietnam in the last two days by a combination of SAMs, ground fire, and jet fighters (Paras. 3-6). A detailed and fairly accurate account of North Vietnam's transportation system has been provided by one of the captured North Vietnamese naval officers (Paras. 7-13).

IV. Other Communist Military Developments:
There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: A North Vietnamese press representative in Laos is quoted as saying on 20 July that he is certain no US prisoners would be given death sentences (Paras. 1-3). The North Vietnamese Army journal has attacked third-party efforts to arrange negotiations on any but Hanoi's terms (Para. 4). [REDACTED]

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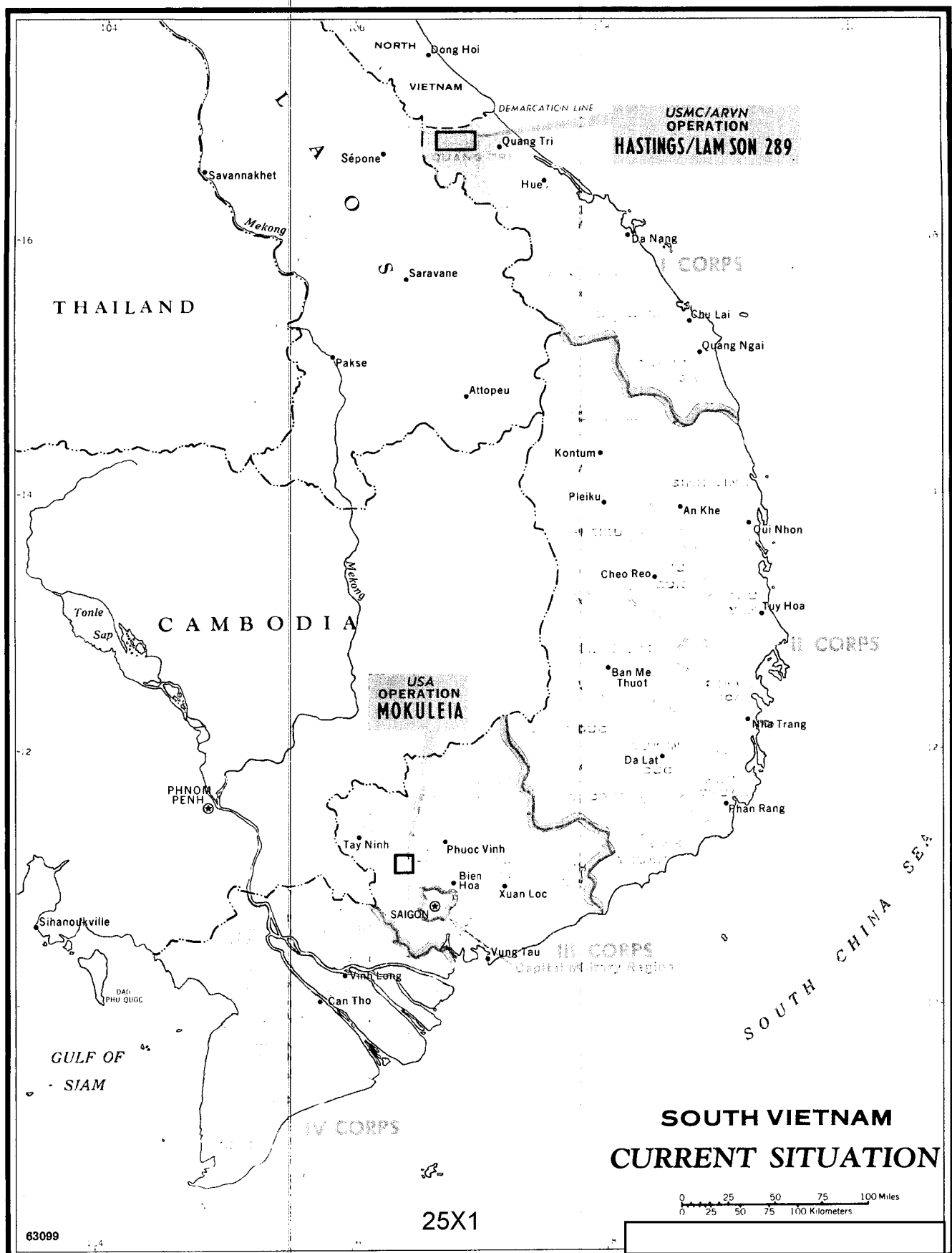
[REDACTED] the evacuation of Hanoi is being carried out (Paras. 5-6).

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[REDACTED]

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Early this morning, a unit of the US 25th Infantry Division participating in Operation MOKULEIA located the bodies of 15 Americans who were missing as a result of the action yesterday in which eight other Americans were killed. All 15 bodies were stripped of equipment and weapons. US casualties for this action now total 23 killed and 37 wounded as compared with Viet Cong losses of 51 killed.

2. Operation HASTINGS/LAM SON 289 is continuing with US Marines and South Vietnamese Army troops sweeping a 300-square-mile area of rugged countryside in northern Quang Tri Province. A total of 51 Americans have been killed and 129 wounded in the heavy fighting which began six days ago. Fifteen South Vietnamese have been killed and 19 wounded. Enemy losses include 376 killed and six captured. A total of 443 tactical air strikes have been flown in support of this operation.

Status of Major Lines of Communications

3. The operational status of South Vietnam's major highways remained about the same during the week of 9-16 July. Portions of Route 1 were closed in Phu Yen and Khanh Hoa provinces. There were no changes in the status of the railway system.

Weekly Review of South Vietnam Battle Statistics

4. The week of 9-16 July compared with the week of 2-9 July:

I. Viet Cong Incidents

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Attacks</u>	<u>Regimental size</u>	<u>Battalion size</u>	<u>Company size</u>	<u>Harassment</u>	<u>Terrorism</u>
2-9 July	19	1	0	2	434	39
9-16 July	19	1	2	3	487	28

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I. Viet Cong Incidents (continued)

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Sabotage</u>	<u>Propaganda</u>	<u>Anti-Aircraft</u>	<u>Total Incidents</u>
2-9 July	69	26	133	720
9-16 July	48	27	198	807

II. Casualties

	<u>VC/PAVN</u>		<u>GVN</u>	
	<u>2-9 July</u>	<u>9-16 July</u>	<u>2-9 July</u>	<u>9-16 July</u>
Killed	1,349	1,200	165	209
Wounded	---	---	316	371
Missing/Captured	<u>71</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>106</u>	<u>39</u>
TOTALS	1,420	1,316	587	619

	<u>US</u>		<u>FREE WORLD</u>	
	<u>2-9 July</u>	<u>9-16 July</u>	<u>2-9 July</u>	<u>9-16 July</u>
Killed	110	65	12	5
Wounded	620	368	12	16
Missing/Captured	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTALS	735	437	24	21

III. Weapons Captured

	<u>VC/PAVN</u>		<u>GVN</u>	
	<u>2-9 July</u>	<u>9-16 July</u>	<u>2-9 July</u>	<u>9-16 July</u>
Individual	382	Not	147	152
Crew-served	<u>58</u>	<u>Reported</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
TOTALS	440		151	155

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. At ceremonies commemorating the 12th anniversary of the Geneva Accords today in Saigon, the South Vietnamese Government once more publicized its uncompromising views on ending the war. A government communique stated that the bombings of the North would cease and that allied troops would be invited to leave the South after Hanoi abandoned its war effort, including the withdrawal of PAVN troops and the dissolution of the National Liberation Front.

2. The communique represented no significant change from previous statements on the subject, and left virtually no room for any negotiations which might end the war. In private, South Vietnamese Foreign Ministry officials also were reported pleased by Ho Chi Minh's recent public reaffirmation of a "hard line," feeling that it should dispel any "wishful thinking" on the subject of peace negotiations.

3. Negotiations which might lead to reunification once the war has ended, however, were alluded to in the communique and also were reportedly touched upon in a speech today by Tran Van Van, the chairman of the government's Civilian-Military Advisory Council. In another speech at the anniversary ceremonies in Saigon today, chief of state General Thieu is reported to have stressed the continuing need to strike at the North as long as the war lasts, and asked for more free world aid to achieve complete victory.

4. According to press reports, 13 North Vietnamese prisoners were released by the government today at the Ben Hai River bridge dividing North and South Vietnam. Three others were scheduled to be repatriated, but were said to have refused to leave at the last moment. As a gesture of defiance toward the Saigon government, the 13 who did cross the border removed their outer clothing provided by the South Vietnamese before reporting to North Vietnamese officials on the other side of the river. North Vietnamese prisoners who

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were repatriated during the Tet holiday period last January also discarded government gifts as they crossed the border. Today's ceremony was attended by International Control Commission representatives and some 2,000 South Vietnamese.

Southern Buddhist Leader Mai Tho Truyen to Join
Father Quynh's Front

5. Southern Buddhist leader Mai Tho Truyen today told a US Embassy officer that he planned to take part in Catholic Father Hoang Quynh's Front of All Religions. Truyen remarked that he would attend a Front reception today as an observer, but that he did not yet plan to take an "active part." Truyen has been estranged from the Buddhist Institute for some time, and was highly critical of the recent Buddhist-inspired "struggle" movement. The US Embassy has commented that Truyen would appear to be an influential recruit for Quynh's Front, which has been critical of the Ky government and its plans for a September election, and has been calling instead for the immediate formation of a representative civilian regime.

RMK Workers' Strike at Camh Ranh Ending

6. About 40 percent of the RMK workers at Cam Ranh returned to work today, and the rest are expected back tomorrow. The US Embassy in Saigon does not yet have details on why the one-day strike started or how it was settled. RMK officials, however, are still concerned that a strike for higher wages may resume in the Saigon area on 25 July. Vietnamese Labor Ministry officials doubt that another strike is imminent, although the US Embassy has commented that these ministry officials said the same thing before the eight-day RMK strike in Saigon last month.

Premier Ky Reportedly Appoints Hoa Hao Member as
Assistant

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7.
Premier Ky has now signed a decree appointing Le

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Phuoc Sung, a Saigon judge and member of the Hoa Hao religious sect, as an assistant in the premier's office. [REDACTED] the leader of the Hoa Hao sect, Luong Trong Tuong, was highly dissatisfied when the announcement of Ky's new cabinet last week excluded Sung's appointment. Tuong reportedly had threatened to withdraw the two Hoa Hao members from the civilian side of the ruling Directorate.

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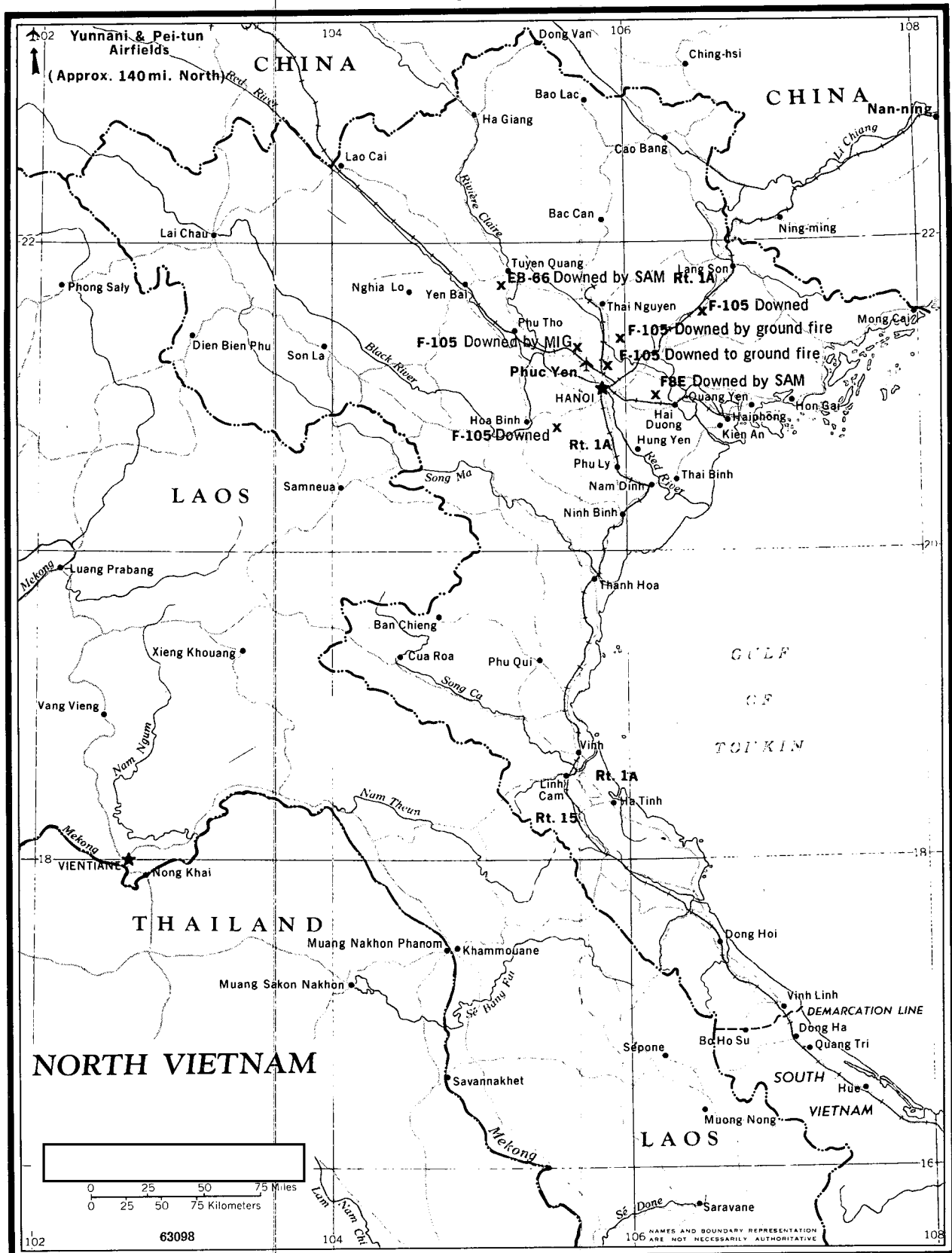
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US Aircraft Losses 19-20 July 1966



III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

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DRV Air Defense

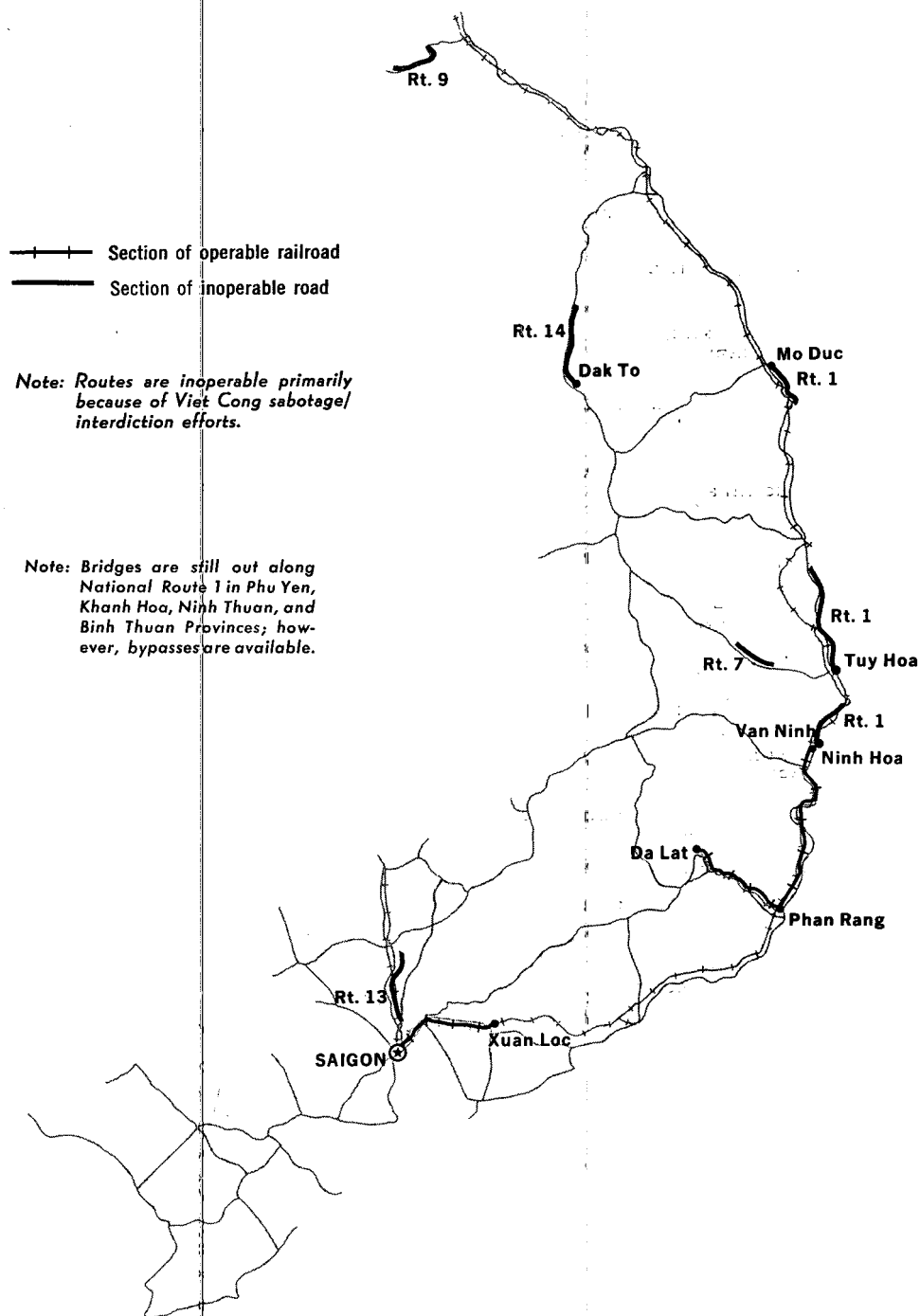
3. Unusual effectiveness on the part of the North Vietnamese air defense system has been apparent during the past two days as missiles, ground fire, and interceptors have combined to bring down seven US aircraft.

4. One F-105 Thunderchief reported lost on 19 July to an undetermined type of fire is now believed to have been shot down by a MIG-17 Fresco 20 miles northwest of Hanoi. In one of the most prolonged battles of the air war, six F-105s on 19 July exchanged fire with at least five MIG-17s, three of which were reported hit by US cannon fire. On the same day, an F8E Crusader was destroyed by a SAM and another F-105 was lost to ground fire. Pilots returning from yesterday's missions reported having encountered 34 surface-to-air missiles.

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CURRENT OPERATIONAL STATUS OF MAJOR TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND COASTAL RAILROAD



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Information as of 16 July 1966

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5. On 20 July, a USAF EB-66 Destroyer was hit by two SAMs as it flew in company with four fighter escorts. The twin-engined electronics warfare aircraft with six crewmen aboard went down 63 miles northwest of Hanoi. An F-105 was hit by 85-mm. AAA fire 55 miles northeast of Hanoi during an approach to a target in the vicinity of the capital. The aircraft began to stream fuel and the pilot apparently ejected but no chute was sighted by his wingmen. Moments later, a second F-105 from the same flight was brought down by an undetermined type of fire 19 miles north-northeast of Hanoi. No chute was observed and rescue attempts were precluded by the location of the downed aircraft.

6. Four F-105s flying 33 miles northeast of Hanoi encountered two MIG-21 Fishbed interceptors but no aircraft on either side were damaged in the brief encounter that followed. In a separate incident, another F-105 was lost after completing a strafing run on a target 27 miles southwest of Hanoi. Wingmen searched the area for 15 minutes after the plane's disappearance but could not sight the missing pilot or determine the cause of the loss of the aircraft.

North Vietnam's Transportation System

7. One of the captured North Vietnamese naval officers has provided a detailed and, for the most part, apparently accurate account of North Vietnam's land transportation situation. The source emphasized that the most important contribution to keeping open North Vietnam's transportation system despite US air strikes has been advice from the North Koreans. He asserted that North Korean engineers toured North Vietnam in 1965 and that Pyongyang has provided publications, plans, and records from the Korean war which the North Vietnamese have carefully studied. He noted that the transportation system was in a chaotic situation after the first US air strikes, but that by adapting North Korean methods, the situation had been greatly improved.

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8. Certain similarities between techniques used in the Korean war and those instituted in North Vietnam in 1965 have been noted in US aerial photography, lending credence to the source's account. The use of floating bridge sections in particular seems to have been borrowed from the North Koreans. With these floating sections the North Vietnamese can pull a span of a bridge back along shore during the day, making the bridge appear inoperable in photography.

9. The source also furnished details on the movement of trucks through North Vietnam to the Laos and South Vietnam borders. He claimed that the majority of material being transported south for infiltration into South Vietnam is being carried by truck rather than by rail or on coastal waterways. Most of the truck traffic travels down Route 1A, according to the source, with Route 15 and other roads used less extensively. This is probably true since Route 1A is the best surfaced north-south road in North Vietnam.

10. The trucks usually travel in convoys of 20 to 40, and fuel tank trucks travel along with the convoys, according to the source. When tankers are not available, trucks carry fuel for the convoy in 55-gallon barrels. Tank trucks and small caches of barrels are positioned along the roads to refuel returning trucks. Two drivers are assigned to each truck and the source believes, from conversations with truck drivers, that each truck makes the entire round trip to the Laos border or to the Demilitarized Zone.

11. The source claimed that trucks are preferred over waterborne supply methods because US air attacks on cargo boats and barges have made such transport unsafe. He also noted that the winding nature of the inland waterways made for slow transportation and, in addition, the US air strikes on dredges had resulted in the silting of many waterways "to the point that inland water traffic is severely restricted."

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12. This point seems to have been somewhat overstated by the source. It is not doubt true that US air strikes have interfered with the waterborne transport effort of the North Vietnamese and that silting is a problem. However, it appears that a considerable amount of material is still being transported on the inland waterways.

13. The source also claimed that the time and labor necessary to offload rail cars, transport the material across temporary bridges, and then reload onto other rail cars is "almost prohibitive." There is probably some truth to this statement also, but aerial photography [redacted] indicate that North Vietnam is still using its rail capacity as best it can despite the labor and time involved. In short, Hanoi appears to be relying heavily on truck transport, but nonetheless makes use of whatever means are available to keep supplies moving.

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. Comments attributed to two North Vietnamese diplomats today appear to have been designed to lower somewhat the heat caused by recent speculation about possible trials and execution of captured US airmen as war criminals, while continuing nonetheless to keep the issue before the public eye. Reuters on 20 July reported that the North Vietnamese chargé in Algiers said of possible trials, "let's be patient, the time will come," suggesting that Hanoi is in no hurry to commit itself to this formal step.

2. On the crucial question of possible execution of US prisoners, the US Embassy in Vientiane reported that the North Vietnamese press representative in that city had told a Western journalist that he was certain that no death sentences would be carried out. He volunteered his opinion that the captives would be sentenced to long prison terms and eventually released at the end of the war. The embassy noted that the North Vietnamese chargé had just returned a few days ago from Hanoi and presumably was thoroughly briefed on the treatment of the US prisoners.

3. Ho Chi Minh's reply to a message from Norman Thomas on the dangers involved in the execution of US prisoners also appeared to be aimed at lowering the pressure somewhat. Ho's message avoided any mention of either trials or execution and merely repeated the standard North Vietnamese line that Hanoi's policy toward "enemies captured in war is a humanitarian policy."

Hanoi on Third Party Negotiation Proposals

4. An authoritative "Commentator" article in the North Vietnamese Army daily broadcast by Hanoi radio on 19 July has ruled out any third party effort to bring about a settlement of the war which is not entirely based on the DRV position. The

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[redacted]

article reflects similar Hanoi propaganda which attacked third-party peace efforts last summer and in this instance appears directed by implication against Indian Prime Minister Gandhi's 7 July proposal for bringing the war to the negotiating table. Commentator accused "certain people who are devotedly encouraging peaceful negotiations" of putting the aggressors on a par with those "suffering aggression." It listed what is in essence Mrs. Gandhi's proposal and characterized it as being no different from the US peaceful negotiations "swindle." The army daily declared there are only two attitudes on the way to settle the Vietnam war--Hanoi's and that of the US. These, the paper asserted, were poles apart and there could be no third stand between them. The article closed by echoing the recent hard-line statements of DRV propaganda, declaring that "we shall fight until not a single US aggressor is seen on our land."

Evacuation of Hanoi

5. [redacted]

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[redacted] the evacuation of the DRV capital announced by the regime shortly after the initial US air raid on targets in the capital region is apparently well under way. [redacted]

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[redacted] all old people, children under 16, and all nonessential personnel have been scheduled for evacuation and the city has already become increasingly deserted. [redacted] special passes are to be required for personnel desiring to return to the capital to ensure that there is no filtering back into the city as has happened in previous evacuations. [redacted]

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[redacted] the areas of the city located near the bridges and dikes of the Red River are receiving priority in the evacuation. This action is probably due largely to the regime's fear that these areas are likely targets for future US air raids. North Vietnamese propaganda in the past several weeks has been particularly vehement in accusing the US of bombing dikes and river facilities in an effort to flood populated areas and rice growing regions.

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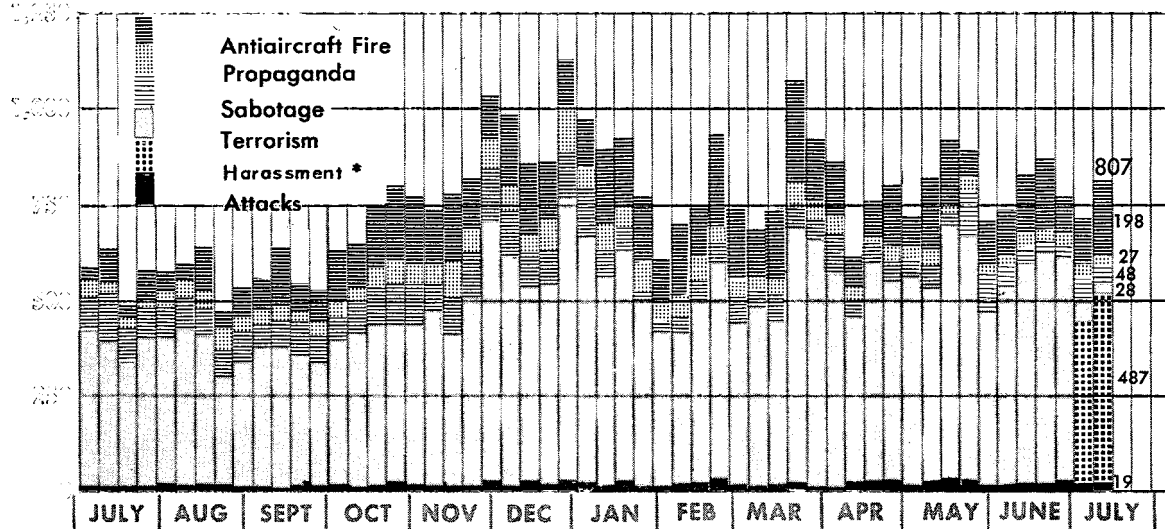
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SOUTH VIETNAM BATTLE STATISTICS

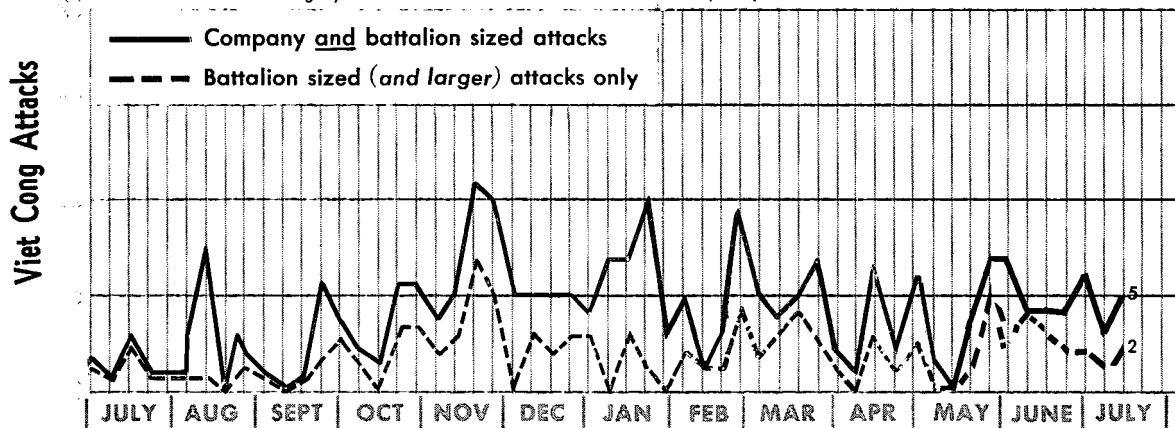
WEEKLY REPORT 10-16 JULY 1966

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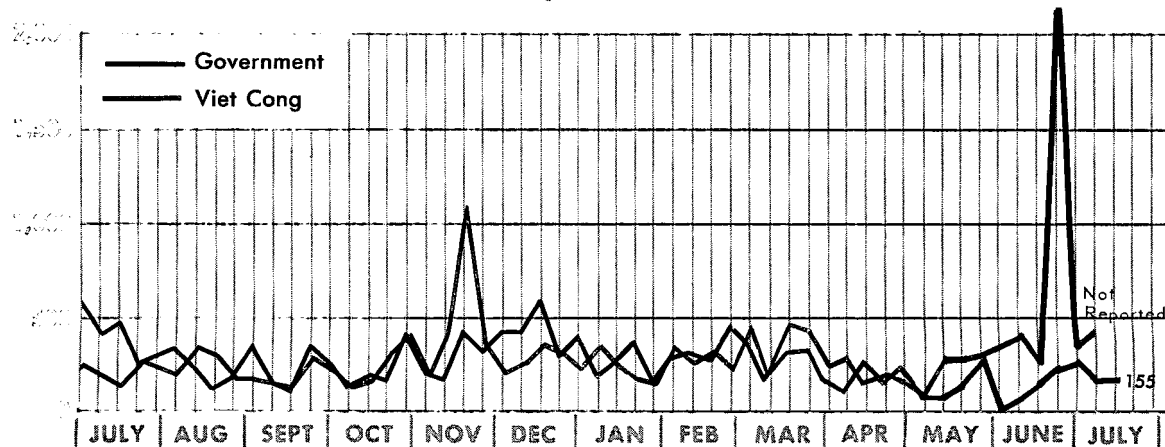
Viet Cong Incidents



* COMUSMACV has added the Harassment category to the weekly report on battle statistics. It covers incidents in which the primary objective is to disrupt temporarily the activities of a unit, installation, village, or hamlet rather than to inflict serious casualties or damage. The use of this new category will result in a general trend reduction in the Terrorism category. However, many incidents formerly reported as **Terrorism** were in reality acts of harassment. The new category was established to correct this discrepancy.



Weapons Losses



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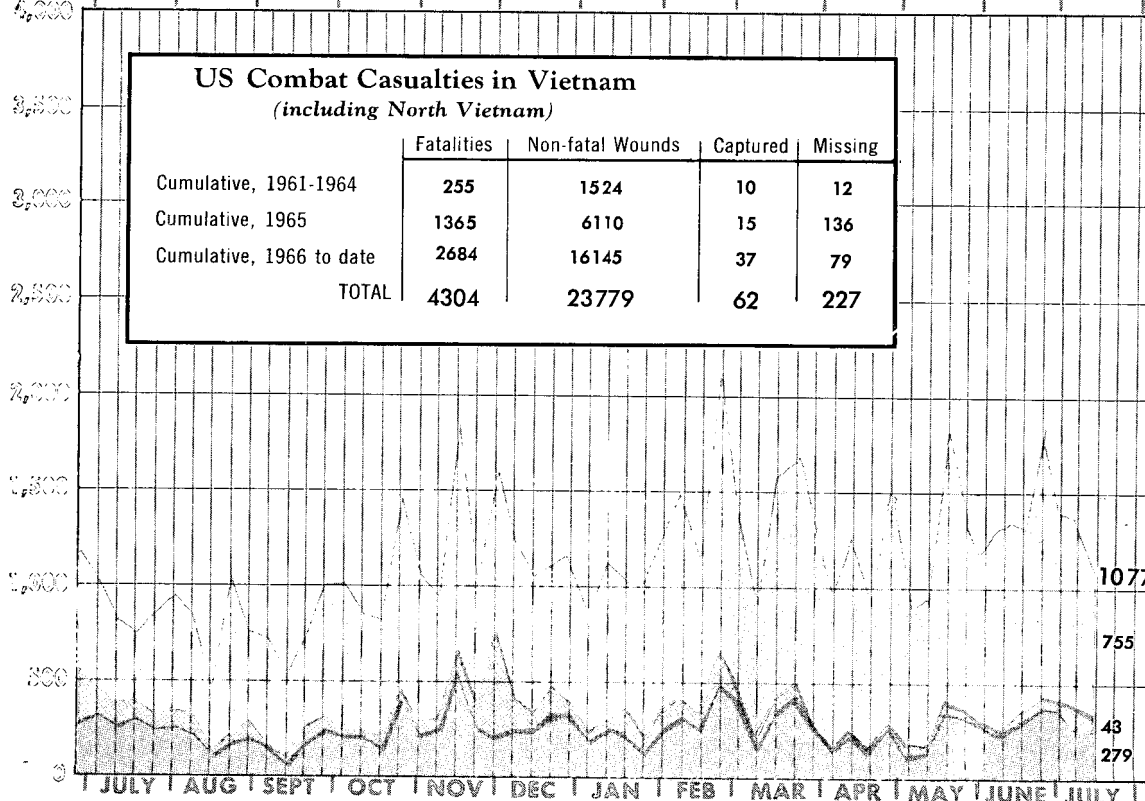
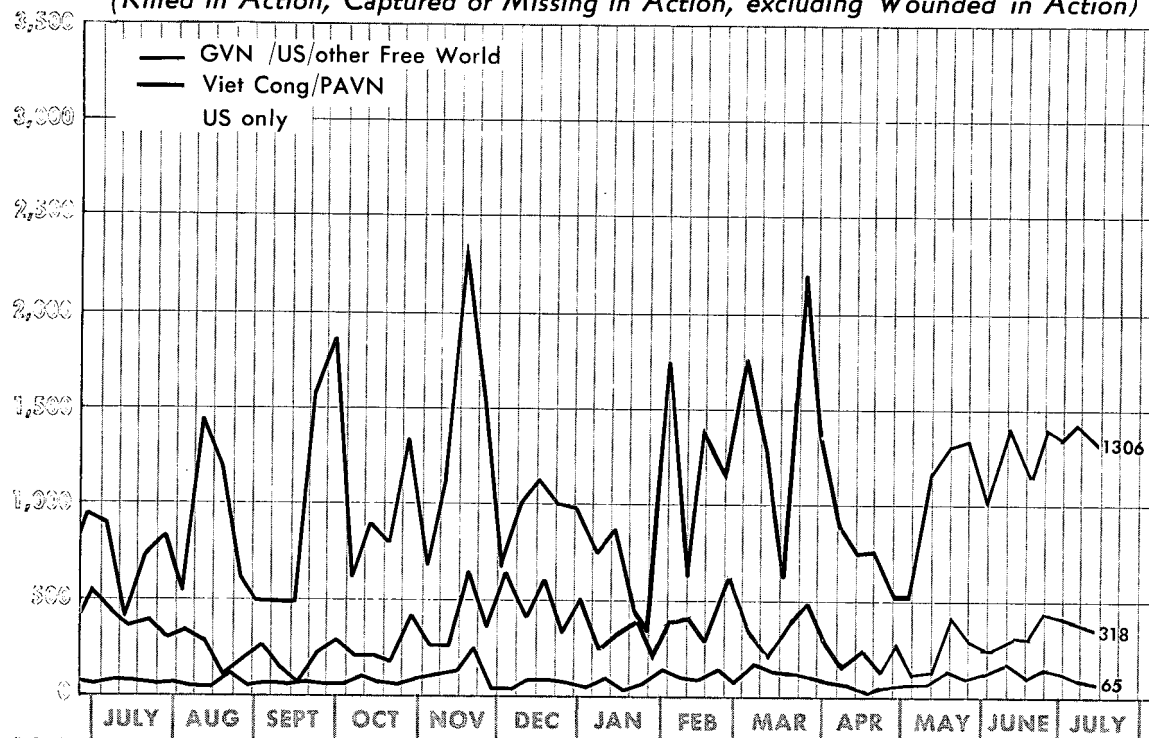
SOUTH VIETNAM BATTLE STATISTICS

WEEKLY REPORT 10 -16 JULY 1966

Total Personnel Losses

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(Killed in Action, Captured or Missing in Action, excluding Wounded in Action)



US Combat Casualties in Vietnam (including North Vietnam)

	Fatalities	Non-fatal Wounds	Captured	Missing
Cumulative, 1961-1964	255	1524	10	12
Cumulative, 1965	1365	6110	15	136
Cumulative, 1966 to date	2684	16145	37	79
TOTAL	4304	23779	62	227

Total Friendly Forces Personnel Losses (US/GVN/Other Free World)

63082 Killed in action Missing or Captured in action Wounded in action